

[The Biography of Guadalupe Lupita Gallegos]

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Guadalupe Lupita Gallegos,

Mary Elba C. [De?] Baca

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THE BIOGRAPHY OF GUADALUPE LUPITA GALLEGOS

Note:—Mrs. Gallegos has been too ill lately to talk very long at a time. Consequently, I have asked her granddaughter, Mary Elba C. [De?] Baca, to get the remainder of the story of her life a little bit at a time and, in turn, tell it to me.

After living in Manuelitas where they had the store Grandmother and her husband moved to Los Alamos where they lived on a farm owned by her mother. After living there for about three months Grandfather came home one day looking very pleased with himself, "Guess what," he said, "I've bought [a?] saw mill at Manuelitas about five miles from where we lived before." And so Grandmother packed up and they moved back to Manuelitas.

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Grandfather became restless before long and went away. Grandmother was left alone with two Indian companions, Maria and Sabina. She says that they were forced to work very hard. They arose at four thirty every morning and prepared breakfast for the peons who worked at the saw mill and spent the rest of the day doing housework and other duties. She remembers and an old man, Juan Antonio, who was an idiot. He would sit on her doorstep from early morning until late at night. This old man had a brother who was a very popular person and a smart politician and Juan Antonio would follow him everywhere on the days that he was not sitting on her [doorstep?]. C 18 - N. Mex.

Grandmother remembers also that the penitentes would pass by her house on their way to the morada, singing, singing 2 all the way. There was no other road and she used to see them punish themselves as they passed by her house. At night she got a horrible [creepy?] feeling as they sang their sad melancholy songs.

At the end of three years Grandfather returned home from his roaming and they moved to San Ilario where they bought a large store. Grandfather went to Kansas and bought two thousand dollars worth of fine stock. Fine stuff that the poor laboring people of the community couldn't afford to buy. As a result the store was not very successful.

They lived at San Ilario for four years. Four years was a long time for Grandfather to live in any one place and his restless nature got the better of him. He wrote to Grandmother from [Carrizito?] to tell her that he had found a beautiful place he wanted to buy. He told her to pack everything and come. She did and there they lived in a little shack until their home was built. Carrizito was a beautiful place but the nearest neighbors lived six miles away. During the day Grandmother was left along with a little girl, the daughter of a neighbor. At night the owls would hoot and the little girl would say, "those are witches."

Before long her husband tired of the new home and decided to move to El Pajarito. Here they built a lovely two story home. For three years she lived there while her husband continued to travel. She disliked El Pajarito very much. It was a hot desert land with not a

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single tree. Maria and Sabina joined her here and two days before Christmas she received a letter from her husband telling her to come to Las Vegas. He had bought a home there. On Christmas 3 day they arrived at Las Vegas. Grandfather had bought a house on Grand Avenue and there they lived for three years. Again he was struck with the wanderlust and so they moved to Los Alamos to her father's place. They lived there for awhile and [ther?] then they moved to San Ilario.

They had been in San Ilario only a short time when Grandfather received word that his mother had died. Immediately he left for Los Alamos and sold Grandmother's mother's rich farm at thirty-five dollars an acre. With this money he payed for his mother's funeral expenses. This is how he did it: He told Grandmother to sign two papers and thus witho'ut her knowledge gained the right to sell the farm. Perhaps you wonder how Grandmother could have been so dumb. Well, she only twelve years old when she married and as her husband was so much older than she was , she was supposed to obey him as one would obey a god.

The second paper was a note for ten tho'usand dollars to be paid to him. He then advised Grandmother to tell her parents that she had signed the papers. She told them but they loved her so much because she was their only child that they would not go against her wishes and did nothing about it.

Grandfather was supporting all of his brothers and sisters and all of their children on Grandmother's money. Grandmother couldn't possibly protest for in tho'se days a wife must obey her husband in all things witho'ut question.

4

Now Grandfather had a wicked brother, Isidore Gallegos, who was as clever and sly as a fox. This man swindled his brother, his relatives, and everyone he could swindle. Now my Grandmother's aunt Juanita and her uncle Rumaldo were very wealthy. They had no

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children of their own and so they brought up mother and a nephew, Felipe, whose mother had died when he was a baby.

They treated the boy like a prince. They were giving him an excellent education and loved him as if he had been their own son. Uncle Isidore probably thought to himself, "If I can only make trouble and cause Felipe's father to take him back Aunt Juanita will take one of my children and bring him up." The wicked fellow then went down to Felipe's father who was an extremely dumb man and said, "Why don't you ask Aunt Juanita to give you back your son. He'll now be able to help you a lot for he's growing big." Thus he convinced the dumb man and both went to Aunt Juanita.

Aunt Juanita, a spunky woman, said, "You shall not take Felipe away from me. Take it to court if you wish but nothing can persuade me to give up Felipe."

"Let him go, Aunt," said the tactful Isidore, "now you may have whichever of my sons you want."

Aunt Juanita who knew his character well enough saw through his little scheme and said, "Although yours may be blonde not one of them will compare with Felipe's little finger " . Now great grandmother owned ten thousand head of sheep. Grandfather sold them at six dollars a head, making Grandmother, of course, sign a bill of sale.

5

Her parents were very angry but they swallowed everything for their daughter's sake. They would do anything to prevent a scandal in the family and besides they hated to hurt their only daughter. At San Ilario my great or great, great grandfather owned the Bell Ranch. His name was Ilario Gonzales. Grandfather, finding himself in need of money, sold the ranch without great grandfather's knowledge. Great grandfather was very old and when the officers went to foreclose on the ranch the old man was grief-stricken and died shortly after.

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Grandmother's money and all of her property were gradually being wasted by grandfather. Several years after he sold the Bell Ranch my father's father, Manuel C. De Baca, a lawyer, came over to my Grandmother's mother to ask if she wanted him to sell her beautiful farms for her at a considerable sum. She consented and when my grandfather Baca want to sell them he fould that they had been sold already.

When Grandfather finished with most of his wife's money he started in on her wealthy relatives. Grandmother's favorite aunt, Nanita Lousianita, lived with Grandmother's parents and she owned one tho'usand sheep. Grandfather sold them. He sold her ranches and everything he could get hold of.

Now my grandparents had a farm and a tho'usand head of cattle at Cabra Springs. Grandfather made Grandmother sign a paper giving him the right to sell them. He gave the paper to his brother but died before he could sell it.

6

When my Grandmother's people went to see about the farm and cattle Grandfather's brother had already taken possession of them.

Now when Uncle Rumaldo, who had brought up Felipe and my mother, died it was discovered that Isidore had tricked him into making out the insurance in his name. When Aunt Juanita went for the insurance she was informed that uncle Isidore had already collected it.

As usual Grandfather was wandering over the country somewhere. Grandmother came to Las Vegas to visit and happened to stop at the mailman's home. There her last baby, who is now Sister M. Dolores at St. Antho'ny's Mercy Hospital at Pocatetlo, Idaho, was born.

When her baby was two months old her husband finally came home. She says that the day before he arrived she felt a terrible sadness creep over her as if something awful were

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going to happen. Grandfather come home and before long had a heart attack and died. When he died he owed a tho'usand dollars at the bank and Grandmother's father paid it.

The wicked trouble maker, Isidore, went to [the?] bank and told them that his brother owned owed a tho'usand dollars and advised them to go collect from his widow for she was very wealthy. The officers went to Grandmother's home with Isidore as witness. Great Grandfather knew that he had paid the debt and finally, after looking all over, he found the receipt and the bank sent its apology. Aunt Juanita saw red and she gave Isidore a piece of her mind.

7

Grandfather left nothing for Lupita but her children to support. Waldo Spiess, Grandmother's lawyer, told her to file suit on the bank; that she could get plenty out of them, but she wouldn't.

You may wonder why Grandmother's people stood for everything for they were good and noble and honest and they tho'ught everyone was like themselves. Grandmother had lots of spunk in after years but then she never dared raise her voice against her husband. Her parents would do nothing to him for fear of hurting their adored daughter.

(To be concluded)